

homefront

Wisconsin Homeland Security Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2007

New leadership for Wisconsin Homeland Security

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Nearly five years ago, on the eve of U.S. military operations in Iraq, I appointed Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening as my Homeland Security Advisor and chair of the newly-created Homeland Security Council. I charged Gen. Wilkening and the council with the challenging task of coordinating and directing our state's operations with local and federal officials to prevent and respond to any threat to our security.

As chairman of the council and my Homeland Security Advisor, Gen. Wilkening has provided important experience, leadership and counsel during difficult times. Behind his leadership, the Homeland Security Council has improved communication and coordination among local, state and federal emergency response agencies and distributed over \$166 million of federal terrorism prevention funds.

As Adjutant Gen. of Wisconsin and commander of the Wisconsin National Guard, Gen. Wilkening has visited our troops abroad, welcomed them home from war, and led disaster recovery efforts and improved Wisconsin's preparedness. From combat service in Iraq and Afghanistan, to hurricanes in the Gulf, and floods and tornadoes here at home, our National Guard has continually shown its bravery and excellence. Gen. Wilkening should be credited for providing important leadership to our courageous men and women in the Armed Forces.

Wisconsin has been fortunate to benefit from the exceptional leadership of Gen. Wilkening during a time of unprecedented importance of our National Guard, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Council, and I speak for every Wisconsin citizen when I thank Gen. Wilkening for



Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar, right, ceremoniously accepts the "colors" from Gov. Jim Doyle Aug. 3 symbolizing the passing of command and control of the Wisconsin National Guard from Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, which took effect Sept. 1.

his service to his state and nation and wish him well during his retirement.

Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar, who previously served as Commander of the 128th Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee, has taken command of the Wisconsin National Guard and will serve as Wisconsin's Adjutant Gen. and Homeland Security Advisor. Gen. Dunbar's experience and strong leadership will ensure Wisconsin's National Guard is prepared to handle any emergency that our state may face. Gen. Dunbar's military service stretches back nearly 25 years, and includes the command of units on overseas missions on three separate occasions.

Throughout the summer, Gen. Dunbar worked closely with Gen. Wilkening and members of the Homeland Security Council and I am confident that he will continue the strong leadership and commitment to homeland security set by Gen. Wilkening. ■



Volume 3 Number 2

Official Newsletter of
the Wisconsin
Homeland Security Council

<http://homelandsecurity.wi.gov>

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*Contents of the Wisconsin Homeland Security magazine
are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by,
the U.S. Government. Printed by the Dept. of
Administration. Circulation: 3,000.*



Printed on recycled paper.

From the Chair

Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening

In this, my final contribution to Homefront as Wisconsin's Homeland Security Advisor, I want to thank you for your support of the Homeland Security Council and our efforts to improve citizen preparedness in the Great Badger State. We have made tremendous progress over the last four years. I am pleased to say that we stand more prepared than ever to address disasters which may impact the citizens of our state.

Together, we have faced extraordinary challenges in recent years. We deployed Wisconsin Emergency Management and Wisconsin National Guard personnel to assist the victims of Hurricane Katrina; we experienced numerous tornadoes and severe weather events and we engaged in planning for a potential pandemic flu outbreak. From each disaster or event, we have drawn strength, experience, and innovation that will serve us well in the future.

State, local and tribal agencies continue to enhance their emergency planning efforts, improve coordination, develop comprehensive plans, and reach out to the private sector. These are all encouraging signs as we look to protect and prepare our state for both known and unknown contingencies in the years to come.

Preparedness and outreach remained top priorities throughout my tenure as Homeland Security Advisor. We need to continue to make sure our citizens are active in being prepared to handle any emergency whether it is natural or man-made. This includes encouraging our citizens and their families to develop an emergency supply kit, develop an emergency family plan and participating in citizen disaster training.

I have no doubt that the incoming Homeland Security Advisor Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar, will build upon



Donald P. Dunbar

Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar
Homeland Security Advisor



Albert H. Wilkening

Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening
Former Homeland Security Advisor

the great work that we have accomplished together as a team. Brig. Gen. Dunbar's demonstrated leadership skills, personal energy and enthusiasm combined with a dedication to operational excellence will advance homeland security and emergency preparedness to even higher levels in Wisconsin. I wish him the very best of success in this regard.

Last thought for now. Continue to move forward as you have in the past. There is — and always will be — more work to be done. ■

REACT Center open for business, training

Grand opening ceremony officially begins training at state's top rescue training facility

In May, under bright blue skies and through the noise of concrete piercing saws, Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening and REACT Center Director Michael Kunesh officially opened the Regional Emergency All-Climate Training Center (REACT) for business and began a busy schedule of emergency response training.

The REACT Center, located in Camp Williams near Tomah, features one of the highest levels of training available in the country. Using state-of-the-art training tools, including a collapsed building facility, challenging rubble pile and High-Risk Entry Facility for law enforcement response simulations, the REACT Center helps first responders in Wisconsin and across the nation prepare for rare but dangerous rescue and response situations.

"At the REACT Center, fire, police, and EMS responders in Wisconsin use state-of-the-art tools and training facilities that simply aren't available to agencies in many other states," said Kunesh. "We are bringing local first responders to the REACT Center so that cities across the state will have the best prepared and trained personnel in the country."

REACT Center Director Michael Kunesh, Office of Justice Assistance Executive Director Dave Steingraber and Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening joined members of the Wisconsin Homeland Security Council and regional task force team members at the REACT Center Grand Opening Ceremony.

At skill stations, first responders learn proper breaching, shoring, and cutting techniques. The collapse building allows trainees to apply skills in a realistic setting. And the 120' x 40' rubble pile culminates the week of training. A collection of concrete slabs, pipes, tunnels, and vehicles create a maze system that challenges even the most tested response veterans. Rescuers must use wood, concrete, and metal breaching techniques to reach manikins located in pipes, a school bus, Ford pick-up truck, Cadillac, and Chevrolet Suburban SUV.

For more information on the REACT Center, or to schedule training for your local first responders, contact Michael Kunesh at 608-427-7425. ■



A first responder at the REACT Center breaches a concrete wall using a water-cooled steel and concrete piercing saw. Triangular cuts are made to maintain the strength of the wall while rescuers search for victims inside the collapsed building.



State homeland security funds cut

State Will Receive over \$15 million of Additional Funds for Communications Interoperability

In July, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced that the Wisconsin Homeland Security application, which included 13 investment justifications, received one of the highest grades in the nation, scoring in the 93rd percentile. Five of the 13 investments were ranked in the 90th percentile or higher, with one proposed funding project, task force regional teams, taking top honors in the 99th percentile.

Despite the high rankings, Wisconsin will receive 27% fewer homeland security dollars in 2007. The state will take in \$17.8 million in FFY2007 compared to \$24.4 million in FFY2006. The program taking the largest hit was the Milwaukee Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), which will receive \$4.63 million in FFY07 compared to \$8.57 million the year prior. The drop in federal funding was due to a large emphasis placed on risk factors, including critical infrastructure, economic factors, and population size.

"While we are pleased with the success of our state's

application and the high marks that it received, the significant drop of federal homeland security funding is disappointing," said Executive Director Dave Steingraber, head of the Office of Justice Assistance. "We will continue to work with our state and local partners to use these funds in a strategic manner to ensure the safety and security of the entire state."

On a positive note, Wisconsin was awarded over \$15.3 million of additional funds to improve interoperable voice, data, and video communications systems through Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) program. The federal government awarded nearly \$968 million to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories through this one-time program. The State Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) will consider what steps the state can take to build or improve upon statewide interoperable communications systems. For more information on the SIEC or their future plans, please visit their website, www.siec.wi.gov. ■

Exercises helping to prepare Wisconsin

Full-Scale Water Contamination Exercise

The Madison Water Utility joined the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Madison HAZMAT team, the 54th Civil Support Team, Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene and Madison Public Health Department to conduct a full-scale exercise simulating the response to a contaminated ground water supply. Following a recommendation of the exercise, sampling devices and a protocol for extracting potentially contaminated water from a ground storage reservoir will be placed at 27 locations around the state.

Information about the samplers will be delivered to all municipal water systems in the state and WisWARN, a new system that will assist water utilities in acquiring needed equipment, resources and conducting reimbursements, will be in place by January 2008.

La Crosse Emergency Exercises

June 12 was a busy day for La Crosse area emergency responders. The Disaster Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations Partnership (DPVPP) group – a multi-agency partnership focused on providing services or support to vulnerable or special needs populations during a disaster – held a 90 minute emergency response tabletop exercise set in a fictitious residential facility. During the lively discussion, actors in the exercise went toe-to-toe to illustrate the importance of a comprehensive emergency operations plan that establishes incident command and authority. Future meetings may include transportation and mobility components.



The Department of Natural Resources's Field Operations Support Unit (FOSU) vehicle provides specialized emergency response support to field wardens and other state agencies during an emergency. The 30' trailer includes radio communications, portable shelters, cots, lighting and other equipment to sustain a deployment of personnel. The FOSU has been deployed and used as a command post at numerous emergency exercises, including the full scale water contamination exercise.

Later that day, the U.S. Postal Service in La Crosse exercised plans for responding to a biological agent in the mail system. After the post office's Biological Detection System alerted officials to a threat, postal workers were evacuated; the Onalaska Fire Department Decontamination Support Team simulated dry decontamination of 15 employees. The Postal Inspectors HazMat Team and La Crosse Level A team also practiced retrieving evidence. 'Victims' were escorted to a Municipal Transit Utility bus, and were transported to the county health department where nurses practiced administering initial medical treatment. ■

Milwaukee evacuation plan takes home award

The eight county Southeast Wisconsin Mass Evacuation Planning Workgroup recently received the Regional Cooperation Award from the Public Policy Forum, a policy research group founded in 1913, for their development of a regional evacuation

plan for Southeast Wisconsin. The award caps 18 months of work by the workgroup to develop the most collaborative regional emergency preparedness initiative ever undertaken in Southeast Wisconsin. The planning guidance will serve as the primary planning tool for counties and municipalities for catastrophic events in the region.

In the shadow of Hurricane Katrina, the group set out to establish or identify evacuation routes, staging areas, route support and security, mass transit contingencies, special needs population evacuation, mass-care shelter operations, and communications interoperability in case of a catastrophic event that affects the entire region. With the completed guidance, the eight-county region now has the operational framework for 11 important functions, including the selection of evacuation routes, establishment of a Joint Information

Center and coordination with the private sector.

"When we started meeting in November 2005 everyone in the Southeast Region stepped up to the plate to be a part of this planning effort, not because they were required to, but because it was the right thing to do for our communities," said Carl Stenbol, Administrator of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Emergency Management Bureau and Co-Chair of the workgroup.

The group is comprised of emergency management coordinators from Ozaukee, Washington, Waukesha, Jefferson, Walworth, Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee Counties and the Milwaukee Urban Area Security Initiative. Representatives from all eight county sheriffs' offices, local public health and public works agencies, healthcare organizations, transportation departments and private and voluntary agencies also participated preparing the guidance. ■



Workgroup co-chair Carl Stenbol stands with Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke after receiving the Regional Cooperation Award on behalf of the Southeast Wisconsin Mass Evacuation Planning Workgroup.

Nuclear threat response tested at Point Beach



Above: A Wisconsin Army National Guard officer checks pictures of suspected terrorists against a detainee stopped at the checkpoint leading into the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant in June.

Right: Security personnel with the Wisconsin Air National Guard patrols the south perimeter of the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant during a June exercise.

The Wisconsin National Guard recently joined forces with local and state emergency services to exercise the state's ability to respond to a simulated threat at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant along Lake Michigan.

The multi-agency exercise took place June 18-22 near Two Rivers and included participants from the U.S. Coast Guard, Wisconsin State Patrol, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Radiation Protection Section, Civil Air Patrol, Manitowoc Co. Sheriff's Department, Northeast Regional Hazmat Response Team, Wisconsin Emergency Management and several local fire departments.

One major goal of the exercise was

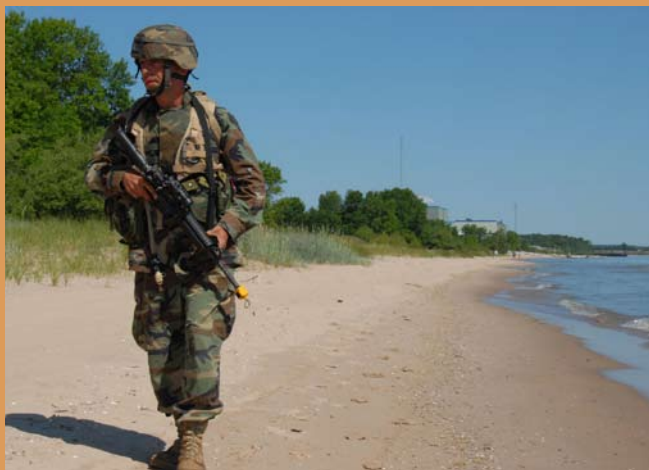
to test communications interoperability between military forces and civilian agencies at the exercise site as well as with the Joint Operations Center in Madison. Just as in a real-world incident, National Guard forces supported local authorities operating in the Incident Command System.

The exercise was very successful, according to Jay Gerondale, an incident commander of the exercise and senior security consultant for the Nuclear Management Company.

"The exercise has been well-run and the National Guard has kept me up-to-date at all times. There have been challenges, but that's why we do this," he said during the exercise. "We're capturing (these challenges) as they come and will sit

down and work them out. We'll be better prepared for next time."

The Wisconsin National Guard participates in such exercises throughout the year to test capabilities and ensure forces are available in the event of state emergencies or to support homeland defense or security missions. ■



WIJIS information sharing grows throughout state

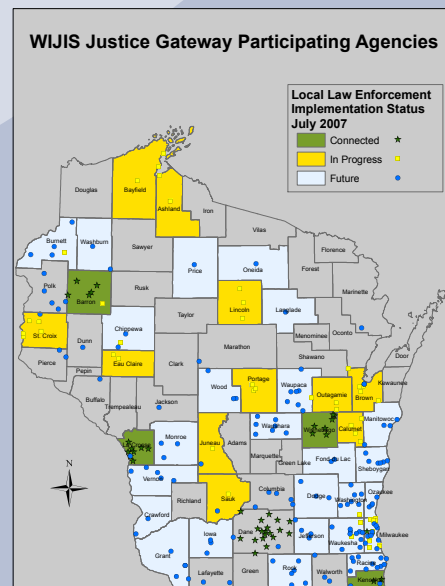
Wisconsin Justice Information Sharing Initiative continues expansion of statewide information sharing tool

The WIJIS Justice Gateway is helping over 1,000 officers access approximately 1.5 million records from 25 different law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin. The Gateway, considered the search engine of law enforcement information sharing, allows certified users to view detailed crime data – including information from incident reports – from other police agencies throughout the state. This helps investigators connect the dots between crimes and criminal activity and better protect their communities from terrorist or criminal activity.

"The Justice Gateway ensures that critical justice data flows across municipal boundaries more quickly than the criminals do," La Crosse County

Sheriff Steve Helgeson said at an August event announcing the county's information sharing progress. "Gateway is a very valuable tool that gives our investigators the information they need to solve a string of related burglaries or possible terrorist activity."

By the end of the year, the Office of Justice Assistance projects that those numbers will grow to 2,000 users with access to 3 million records from nearly 100 police and sheriff's departments. Prosecutors' data will also be available from 66 county district attorneys' offices by the end of the year. For more information on the WIJIS Justice Gateway, visit www.oja.wi.gov/wijis or contact Jim Pingel at wijis@wisconsin.gov. ■



Air Support Unit protects homeland through the skies

For decades, the Wisconsin State Patrol has used aircraft effectively for traffic enforcement and other emergency responses, such as search and rescue. A trained trooper piloting an aircraft can observe wide expanses of highway and terrain. This capability also has direct benefits for homeland security protection.



Above: A trained State Patrol trooper piloting an aircraft can observe wide expanses of highway and terrain, like this view of the Whistling Straits Golf Club on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Below: The State Patrol Air Support Unit provides important information to troopers on the ground during homeland security missions as well as traffic enforcement efforts.

The State Patrol Air Support Unit has three specially equipped Cessna 172 planes, stationed in Madison, Oshkosh and Eau Claire. Approximately 10 troopers are licensed pilots ready to respond for air support missions throughout the state. Using thermal imaging equipment, night vision binoculars and high-resolution cameras, these pilots are a tremendous asset in case of a variety of homeland security threats or attacks.

If a chemical or biological agent is released into the air, State Patrol pilots can quickly and accurately determine the movement of the hazardous substance cloud and communicate that information to incident command.

In the event of an evacuation, State Patrol pilots can quickly identify areas of congestion and other problems that might prevent the safe and efficient movement of traffic.

The Air Support Unit also can help gather intelligence for effective planning for emergencies. Aircraft can photograph and provide video images of critical infrastructure on highways and in communities for planning evacuation routes and perimeter security in case of a threat or attack.

“The State Patrol Air Support Unit provides years of experience in traffic enforcement and control,” said State Patrol Superintendent David Collins. “This experience greatly enhances our ability to plan for and respond to homeland security missions and other emergencies around the state.” ■



Citizen Corps builds awareness and preparedness

The Citizen Corps Council of South Central Wisconsin (Green, Rock and Walworth Co.) developed a project to increase awareness and self-preparedness for youth in their communities by distributing Family Disaster Plan Outlines to kindergarten students in Green County. The American Legion Auxiliary in Monroe assisted the council by assembling folders.

Green County Emergency Management and the South Central Red Cross together presented the program to the students who were encouraged to take the outline home and complete it with their parents. Each student was given a certificate when they completed the plan.

The successful outreach program helped to develop a strong relationship with the Legion Auxiliary – who has already offered to assist with other projects. ■

Red Cross and Emergency Management workers give kindergartners in Green County Family Disaster Plan Outlines. The students were encouraged to complete the outlines, which stressed the importance of emergency planning, with their families and they received a certificate upon completion.



State Patrol improving its criminal interdiction and homeland security capabilities

Thanks to added canine support, drug smugglers will find traveling through Wisconsin a much more difficult task. To improve its homeland security and criminal interdiction capabilities, the State Patrol recently added new K-9 resources and enhanced officer training.

Earlier this year, the State Patrol K-9 program became operational after five drug sniffing dogs and their State Patrol handlers received extensive training. Currently, the dogs are strategically stationed around the state to augment the State Patrol's commercial motor vehicle criminal interdiction efforts. The dogs are trained to detect drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine (powder and crack), heroin, and methamphetamine, that can be cleverly concealed in a truck cab or trailer.

"In addition to the devastation it causes in Wisconsin communities, drug smuggling is a major source of funding for terrorists, and anything we can do to disrupt their funding helps fortify homeland security," said State Patrol Superintendent David Collins.

In addition to illegal drugs, commercial motor vehicles may be used to transport explosives, firearms and hazardous materials that could be used in a terrorist attack.

To help combat this threat, the State Patrol this summer sponsored an advanced highway criminal and terrorist interdiction training called Desert Snow for approximately 80 law enforcement officers.



State Patrol Sgt. Paul Matl and his canine partner search a commercial motor vehicle. The State Patrol's new K-9 resources will help to detect drug smuggling in Wisconsin.

This year's Desert Snow training will focus on commercial motor vehicle interdiction. Last year, officers from 23 agencies attended Desert Snow, which is considered the nation's premier highway criminal and terrorist interdiction training program.

Officers who complete the Desert Snow program also are excellent assets for training their fellow officers in the latest terrorist and criminal interdiction strategies

and techniques.

"The State Patrol and our law enforcement partners are continually evaluating what we do and how we do it in order to improve our homeland security and criminal interdiction capabilities," said Collins. "Striving for continuous improvement is now more important than ever to meet our public safety mission." ■

Announcing Wisconsin Preparedness Forum

Will bring together volunteer non-profits, private sector, local and state agencies to discuss Wisconsin's emergency preparedness

The Wisconsin Citizen Corps Council, Wisconsin Division of Public Health, the Southeast Wisconsin Homeland Security Partnership, and the Business Recovery Planners Association of Southeast Wisconsin will hold a Wisconsin Preparedness Forum on November 13-14 in Stevens Point to bring together critical public, private, and non-profit partners to discuss and improve Wisconsin's emergency response capabilities.

Over 300 participants are expected to attend this innovative opportunity to learn about Wisconsin's

current capabilities and discuss future public and private partnerships, citizen preparedness efforts, and multi-agency planning and exercising.

At the conclusion of the forum, a joint tabletop exercise will be conducted to give forum participants the unique opportunity to watch a live exercise between multiple agencies and partners.

For more information, please contact David Duecker at the Office of Justice Assistance, david.duecker@wisconsin.gov. ■

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